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United States Senate

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Agenda Item G.4.c
Supplemental Public Comment 5
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March 11, 2009

Mr. Donald K. Hansen, Chairman
Pacific Fishery Management Council
7700 NE Ambassador Place, Suite 101
Portland, Oregon 97220-1384

Dear Chairman Hansen:

I am writing regarding the Pacific Fishery Management Council's ongoing efforts to implement an individual fishing quota (IFQ) system for the Pacific groundfish fishery. I urge you to provide for the development of Community Fishing Associations (CFAs) within the IFQ process by taking the following actions:

1. Develop a framework for CFAs in the current set of trailing actions to be completed by June 2009, including specific accumulation limit rules for CFAs.
2. Allow entities that qualify for quota share in excess of individual accumulation limits the opportunity to divest of the excess after initial allocation. This could help retain quota within communities rather than redistributing resources throughout the fishery.
3. Restrict ownership of quota, after initial allocation, to individuals actively engaged in fishing (i.e., fishermen or crew on board of fishing vessels) or to CFAs. CFAs can protect processors and communities without the need for processor quotas.

Fishermen, fishing related businesses, community leaders, and Council members have repeatedly expressed concern that an IFQ system will result in consolidation of resources within a few large fishing ports. This could be very detrimental to West Coast communities whose economies and culture depend on the groundfish fishery.

Other fisheries that have implemented an IFQ system have experienced this consolidation, typically within the first three to five years after initial allocation. Therefore, it is important to establish measures to mitigate community disruption prior to any initial allocations. CFAs would limit consolidation and help West Coast communities preserve the local fishing industry.

Thank you for your efforts to improve the management of the Pacific Coast trawl fishery. I look forward to working with you to ensure that the benefits of a healthier fishery are shared among West Coast communities.

Sincerely,



Barbara Boxer
United States Senator

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